

May 11, 2011

Dallas Sutliff
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State of Michigan
House of Representatives
Agriculture Committee

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

I am here today to provide testimony to this Committee of my experience as a property owner/farmer adjacent to a game ranch that provided wild pigs for hunters to harvest. Our farm was one of the 1st farms in Michigan adjacent to a hunting facility where the boars on the facility were found to have pseudo rabies virus.

In the spring of 2004 after 24 acres of corn had been planted on property located across the road from my house, we started to see pigs in the field. After investigation we found that the pigs were escaping from the adjacent game farm by tunneling under the fence. These pigs were feeding on the corn field and returning "home" at their pleasure.

The owner of the hunt facility, Scott Turner was contacted about the subsequent crop damage and he said, "They are not my pigs." I understand Mr. Turner's natural response would of necessity be the pigs were not his, because of the potential liability. This field of corn was substantially damaged by these pigs and had to be replanted. Pigs are like little vacuum cleaners in a corn field. They follow the row for a period 6 to 15 feet and eat the seeds and seedlings, then move to the next row. The excessive crop damage to the field required the entire field to be replanted. The subsequent yield was about 40 bushel per acre less. I feel my loss was several thousand dollars. I understand that Scott Turner was provided reimbursement by the State of Michigan for the destruction of his pigs when his animals were eradicated. I never was compensated for the loss we experienced to this corn field.

I harvested one of those pigs during this time frame. A neighbor to the east of me harvested one as well. A neighbor that lives on the west end of the game farm harvested one during deer hunting season that year, one the following deer season, then shot at but missed one that year too. The following spring I organized a hunt and we harvested another boar. These pigs are very difficult to successfully hunt because they rapidly go nocturnal. We never had a problem with wild boar in this area until this game farm introduced them.

I raised pigs in the late 1970 early 1980's on my farm. I know how hard it is to contain this animal when everything required is provided by the farmer; such as food, water, and

shelter. Mine was a hog finish operation and the animals were not hunted or harassed in any way. I never had a pig escape. I have been a hunter for over 48 years. The excitement of inexperienced hunters chasing a wounded 250 pound to 500 pound animal can easily cause the startled herd to run through the enclosure intended to protect the adjacent public. When I shot the wild boar on my property the remainder of the 50 or more pig herd returned "home" to the hunt facility by going back under the fence.

In summation, it has been some time since I have seen or harvested a wild pig on my farm because the source of introduction to the wild has been eliminated by the closure of this game farm and the eradication of the infected animals by the State of Michigan. I have resided on my farm since 1974 and never had a problem or sighting of wild pigs until Scott Turner introduced them on his hunt farm. In my opinion the subsequent pig sightings in our area were from this farm. The pigs released from this game farm moved to the south and west. Recently I learned there have been sightings near Brandt and Meridian Roads.

Thank You,

Dallas Sutliff

Top: Dallas Sutliff property, Saginaw County - 2004



Bottom: Dallas Sutliff property, Saginaw County – 2004



Top: Dallas Sutliff property, Saginaw County - 2004



Bottom: Dallas Sutliff property, Saginaw County - 2004



Top: Dallas Sutliff property, Saginaw County - 2004

